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E S T H E R

Queen of *P E R S I A*.

A N

Historical *P O E M*

I N

F O U R B O O K S.

By *J O H N H E N L E Y*, B. A. *K*
Of *St. John's College, Cambridge*.



L O N D O N:

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ESTHER

Queen of Persia.

AN

Historical POEM

IN

FOUR BOOKS.



By JOHN H. B.A.

Of St. John's College, Cambridge.



LONDON:

Printed for H. CURRIE, and J. FEMBERTON, in
Fleetstreet; and A. BARTHELOMEW, in Lon-
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Price 1s. 6d. bound.



TO
THOMAS BENNET,

OF
WELBY, in Leicestershire, Esq;

SIR,
 YOU will Pardon the
Freedom of this Address
from One, who owes his
Capacity of making You
this Offer, to the Favour of Your
Family; and hopes He is not lia-
ble to the Imputation of a Crime,

The Dedication.

when He is convinc'd it would be a Breach of his Duty to inscribe this Poem to a different Name. I might take a just Occasion here to enlarge upon the allow'd Merits of my PATRON, if I was not extremely Tender of giving a Distaste to Him, as well as a needless Information to the Publick. If this Attempt has the Good Fortune to make a tolerable Figure in your Eye, the AUTHOR will have his Aim: Whose Particular Ambition it is to approve Himself upon all Occasions,

S I R,

Your most Devoted,

Humble Servant,

John Henley.

THE
CONDUCT
OF THIS
POEM:

WHICH
Is divided into Four BOOKS.

The Argument of the First
BOOK.

THE POEM opens with an Address to the Holy Spirit, and a Sketch of the General Design. The Greatness of the Persian Empire is describ'd; and the Succession of the Emperors trac'd, from Cyrus down to Xerxes, who enlarg'd the Monarchy, with several New Acquisitions. The Character of Vashti his Empress, and her

Extraction : A Description of the Palace in Shushan, the Capital of Media. Xerxes, after a Run of Conquest, when he had establish'd a Peace throughout the Empire, proclaims a solemn Rejoycing at Court, during the Space of a Whole Year ; and gives a Royal Entertainment to the Nobles of Persia. The Pomp of that Appearance is describ'd ; and the Sacrifice to their God the Sun. The Magnificence of the Room where the Treat was given, and the Riches of the Furniture are represented. Vastati pays the same Respect to the Court Ladies ; and Prince Arfaces to the Lower People of Quality. The Common Sort are likewise Entertain'd. The Pontiff of the Sun is treated with great Honour and Distinction. The Temperance of the Persians. Admetha, a Master of Musick, plays to the Court. The Subject of his Song, and the Close of the First Day of the Feast.

The

The Argument of the Second BOOK.

The Feast continu'd. Xerxes resolves to oblige the Lords with a Sight of Vashti, contrary to the Law and Practice of the Persian Court, which forbids the Empress to shew Her Self in that manner. He sends a Message for Her; which She rejects with Indignation. The Surprise of the whole Assembly at her Refusal, and the Resentment of the Emperor. How He express'd Himself upon that Occasion. The Speech of Memucan, Counsellor of State to Xerxes; exhorting him to depose Vashti, and take another Empress. Vashti is disgrac'd accordingly. The Feast is broke off. Certain Persons are appointed to look out a Set of the Finest Women in Persia, and convey them to the Palace; where several Apartments are assigned them, in Order to the Election of a New Queen. Esther appears at Court among the

the rest. Her Name, and Parentage. How She came to be settled in Persia. The wretched State of the Jews, during their Captivity in Syria. Their Delivery by Cyrus: Who encourages some of them to stay in Persia, while Ezra leads off the rest to Jerusalem. The Good Offices of Mordecai, to Esther his Niece: A Character of her Beauty, and other Perfections. The Ceremonial, She, and the rest of the Candidates go through at Court. Mordecai's Concern for Her, and Concealment of her Birth and Religion. The Day of Choice. Esther is soon distinguish'd by the Emperor, and set upon the Throne. She makes no Discovery of her Alliance to Mordecai, or the Relation She bore to the Jews. The Celebration of the Marriage.

The

The Argument of the Third BOOK.

The Constant Virtue of Esther ; and her Gratitude to Mordecai , by Procuring Him a Post at Court. The Circumstances of Mordecai , in Point of Fortune, before his Advancement. His Character. His Favour at Court raises Him the Envy of Bigthan and Teresh, two Old Servants in the Palace. They form a Design against the Life of Xerxes in Revenge. The Plot is detected by Mordecai , and the Service He did the Empire in the Discovery , is recorded in the Memoirs of the Palace. The approaching Danger of Him and the Jews, by the Rise of Haman. The Qualifications of that Minister describ'd : And the

the Character of a False Patriot. Xerxes decrees Him Divine Honours : Which Mordecai refuses to pay Him. Haman is incens'd, and contrives the Ruin of Mordecai, and of the Jews. He misrepresents that People to the Emperor, and gains the Royal Warrant, for the Destruction of all the Jews in Persia.

The

The Argument of the Fourth BOOK.

The Distress of the Jews, and the Concern of Mordecai for the Common Interest. He goes to Court, and informs Esther by an Eunuch of the Design; who promises to intercede with the Emperor for her Countrymen: But thinks it proper, that a Fast should be first proclaim'd, to avert the Divine Displeasure. She approaches the King the next Morning; who receives Her with Particular Marks of Favour: And invites Him to an Entertainment the Day following; desiring, that Haman only should attend Him thither. Haman plumes himself upon this New Honour; and returns Home, to communicate the Good News to his Cabal: But sees Mordecai again, in the Entrance of the Palace, deny Him that Respect He demanded; and acquaints his Friends with it.

it. Zareffa, his Wife, proposes a Gibbet to be rais'd, opposite to the Banqueting-House in the Royal Garden, and Mordecai to be executed upon it the next Day. The Night before, Xerxes was restless, and call'd for the Memoirs of the Palace. He finds there an Instance of Mordecai's Fidelity, in the Case of Bigthan and Teresh; and asks what Return was made Him for it. Then sends a Waiter, to enquire who was in the Court. Haman appears there; and comes to the Emperor, with a Resolution to beg his Warrant for the Death of Mordecai. He is disappointed, by a Question the Emperor puts to him, and a Positive Command to do Publick Honours to Mordecai that Day, with his own Hands. Haman is mortified; and his Friends take this Alarm, as a Presage of his Fall. He is sent for to the Queen's Treat: That and the Bower are describ'd. Esther, at the Instance of the Emperor, tells Him the Cause of her Desiring that Interview. The Emperor is enrag'd, and orders Haman

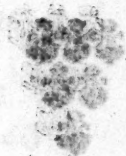
of this P O E M. ix

man to be hang'd on the Gibbet which He erected for Mordecai. The Fatal Commission is revok'd ; and full Power given to the Jews, to use their Enemies as they please. A Day of Thanksgiving is appointed, in Memory of that Joyful Event, to be Celebrated yearly for ever. Xerxes receives a Tribute from the whole Empire : And Mordecai enjoys the Second Place in the Government.

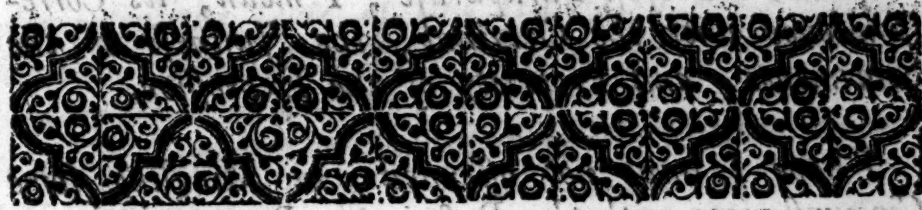


P R E F A C E

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not to multiply the Defects of it, by Examining
it upon any other Rules, than such as are immediately
proper to a Poetical Paragraph: I mean, its Corre-



circumstances with the Poetical Part, which are
not expressly in Scripture. There are but few grow
naturally out of the Subject, and inoffensive by a Po-

P R E F A C E.

because they appear necessary to present any
Abstracts or Gems in the Narration, to make the

*Was tempted to design the Following POEM,
by the Agreeableness and Importance
of the Story : The whole Compass of
Scripture-History does not afford a more
Beautiful Subject for a Poetical Improvement, than
the Facts related in this Part of it.*

*The Grandeur of the Persian Court, rais'd at this
Juncture to its utmost Height ; the Splendor of Xer-
xes's Triumphal Feast ; the Characters of Vashti,
Esther, Mordecai, and Haman, with the several Ad-
ventures of each, are as Good a Field for an Enlarge-
ment of this Nature, as any that can be met with
in the whole Bible.*

*I am very sensible the Piece is not without Imperfe-
ctions ; but must desire the Indulgent Reader, if he
feels any Inclination to Criticize, to do me the Ju-*

stice, not to multiply the Defects of it, by Examining it upon any other Rules, than such as are immediately Proper to a Profest Paraphrase ; I mean, its Correspondence with the Original, the Justness of the Sentiments, and Propriety of the Expression.

I hope I have not offended, in Mingling some Circumstances with the Descriptive Part, which are not expressly in Scripture. They are but few, grow naturally out of the Subject, are justifiable by a Parallel Practice of the Best Poets, and not at all improbable. I thought my self oblig'd to make use of them, because they appear'd necessary to prevent any Abruptness or Gap in the Narration, to make the Transitions Full, Easy, and Regular, and contribute to the Embellishment of the Poem.

The Occasion, Length, and Solemnity of the Feast of Xerxes, demanded a longer Stay upon it, than I thought at first to have given it. Not to mention, that the Holy Scripture it self is something more Particular in Representing the Pomp of it, than it uses to be upon the like Occasions ; and seems to dwell upon it, in order to give us a Brighter Impression of the Greatness of Persia at that Time, tho' the Reason of that Particularity does not appear. No Person therefore, allowing for the Freedoms of Poetry, can charge me with any Fault upon this Head.

Authors have been extremely divided, about Settling the Chronology of ESTHER : Some place it in the Reign of Darius Hyftaspis, the Fourth Persian Empe-

Emperor : Some declare for Xerxes, and others for Artaxerxes, the Two following Monarchs. I have taken the Liberty to go into the Opinion of those, who refer the Date of this History to the Time of Xerxes, whom I make the same with Ahasuerus. This is countenanced by the Sacred Text, Ezra iv. 5, 6, 7. where the Succession of the Persian Emperors is deduc'd in this Series, ——— Darius, Ahasuerus, Artaxerxes. And 'tis agreed, that Xerxes succeeded Darius. To confirm it, I might produce the Authority of Scaliger, and Helvicus in his Tables; Strauchius, Junius and Tremellius, in their Annotations; Calvisius, and other Chronologers, both of our own Country, and Foreigners. Nay, Drusus himself allows it at the Long Run; tho' he objects to ESTHER's being the Amestris of Herodotus, as Scaliger maintain'd.

However, tho' I wanted all this Evidence, a Poet is not confin'd to the Measures of an Historical Writer, in any Dark Points of Time; but may chuse at Discretion in Controverted Cases, where the Historian is only oblig'd to give a General Report of the Accounts he meets with, without Deciding in Favour of any Particular.

I can't give the Inquisitive Reader better Satisfaction about the Name of Ahasuerus, or Assuerus, than Dr. Hyde has done, in his History of the Religion of the Ancient Persians, a very Valuable Collection of Oriental Learning.

He informs us, p. 43. c. 2. " That the Persic
 " Name among the Old Jews, was, אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ 'O-
 " ξυάρ, or Achsuar; and among the Later,
 " אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ 'Oξυάρ: But the Greek, in those Days,
 " being a Language of great Vogue in the East,
 " as might be prov'd from a Variety of Instances,
 " the Persic Proper Names were often modell'd ac-
 " cording to that Idiom. As in Isaiah, what is
 " printed כּוּרִישׁ Coresh, ought to be read כּוּרִישׁ
 " Kōres; and in Daniel, what is read דַּרְיָוֶשׁ
 " Darjavesch, ought to be restor'd דַּרְיָוֶשׁ Δαρεικος.
 " So, conformably to this Practice, the Word
 " אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ 'Oξυάρ, clos'd with a Greek Termini-
 " on, ns, or os, was read in the same manner
 " in Scripture, as in the Profane Writers; אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ
 " 'Oξυάρης, or 'Oξυάρος, or Achsuaros, and 'Aoxē-
 " eos. But the Pointers not apprehending it, mould-
 " ed the Name into Ahash-verosh, or Achashverosh,
 " which might have been pointed with much more
 " Propriety, Achsuáres, or Achsuéros, and drop-
 " ping the Greek Termination, 'Oξυάρ, or 'Oξύης.
 " But now this Oxyares it self was a Corrup-
 " tion; for the Regular Name among the most
 " approved Writers, was, 'Oξυάρτης; and it was
 " a Name common to several Kings in Media, Per-
 " sia, and Bactria, and all those Countries, where
 " the Persic was the Reigning Language. And in-
 " deed, 'tis very surprizing to consider how many
 " Variations this Name has suffer'd. The Arabs
 " ever write it in their Books by Ze, and read
 " it

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v

" it 𐎠𐎵𐎲𐎠 Azdeshîr; whence the Jews some-
 " times in their's write it 𐎠𐎵𐎲𐎠 Afdeshîr, in-
 " stead of the true Persic 𐎠𐎵𐎲𐎠 Ardeshîr, or
 " Ardashîr. From this Reading, Agathias, and
 " some of the Greeks, have given this Name a-
 " nother Turn; viz. Αρταγέρης, Αρταξέρης, and
 " Αρταξέρης; which, letting the Greek Termi-
 " nation fall, remain Αρταξέρ, or Ardashîr. A-
 " nother Change it has met with in the Book of
 " Nehemiah, is, 𐤀𐤓𐤏𐤁𐤏𐤏𐤓𐤏 Αρτα-ζάνης, or Ar-
 " tah-shast; where, as before in Αρταξέρ, the
 " Letter ξ, as well in Shape, as in Situation
 " and Sound, answers the Hebrew שׁ inverted,
 " and the Arabick ش Shin; and originally appears
 " to have been pronounc'd the same way, as we
 " may fairly collect from the Analogy between
 " them. But because the Greeks labour'd under
 " the same Difficulty with the Ephraimites, in
 " Humouring the Sh, they did it as far as they
 " were able, and gave it another Air. Or possibly,
 " the Cadmean Dialect was the same with that
 " of Ephraim. For the Primitive Sounds of the
 " Greek Letters, are to be trac'd to the Phœni-
 " cian ones of Cadmus, from whom they were
 " deriv'd. And therefore the Θ, or Ϝ Gheta,
 " (which, as well in the Rank of the Alpha-
 " bet, as in Numerical Power, corresponds to
 " the Hebrew ו, and the Arabick و, and
 " the Samaritan 𐤅,) is not to be sounded by

“ the Th jointly, but like those Oriental Letters
 “ in a separate way, T’heta.

’Tis not to be admir’d, that foreign Names, Persic, Chaldee, and the like, should receive a Turn so distant from the Original, in the Hebrew Copies: If we consider, that they took all of them from Common Report and Hearsay, and so transcrib’d them, not according to the Orthography, but the Fashion of Pronouncing them, that prevail’d among their Informers.

But now it might happen, That tho’ the Persons, from whose Mouths they had them, spoke the Original Language, and the Right Dialect, they might not utter the Words precisely true, and so mislead the Historian. And if they us’d another Dialect of the same Language, their Informations must still be more remote from the Original Verity: But if they spoke a Language entirely different, their Speech, and consequently, the Words Copied from it by a Writer of another Nation, must be so in Proportion. Besides all this, there might be some Sounds in the Exotic Tongue, which another was not Capable of Expressing: As we see in Fact it is, in several such Cases. And so the Jews, or Greeks, for Instance, must be oblig’d to plant some Consonants, of a Sound the nearest Akin to the Original ones they can’t utter, in their Place. And then another Inconvenience arises, from the
 Dan-

Danger of altering or misplacing the Vowels, after the Consonants are adjusted in the Hebrew : For varying the Points, will give the same Word a Cast perfectly different. As appears in the Word אַכַּשׁ־וֶרוֹשׁ, which unpointed, may be pronounc'd 'Ozuros, like the Original Perfic, with the Greek Termination ; but with the Punctuation at present establish'd, is אַכַּשׁ־וֶרוֹשׁ Acash-verosh.

" 'Tis a General Mistake, says Dr. Hyde, to render כוּשׁ Cush, Æthiopia : Whereas it never signifies Æthiopia in any Part of the Sacred Text, but always, either a Tract of Babylonia, or Arabia. The Patriarch Cush, who was the Father of Nimrod, call'd Ninus by the Prophane Historians, was seated in a Part of Babylonia, from whence his Descendants, growing too numerous in process of Time for Chaldæa, which they were possess'd of, were oblig'd to remove into the Neighbouring Parts of Arabia : And hence it is, that the Country which was afterwards call'd Arabia, from Yaarab the Son of Joktan, who likewise reigned there, was term'd before, the Land of Cush, and after, the Land of Havilah. Thence the Wife of Moses, who was an Arabess of Midian, was call'd כוּשִׁית Cushith, or a Woman of Cush ; and Tirhaca was King of Arabia Felix, not of Æthiopia : For the Cushean Colony, transplanted from Chaldæa into the adjoining Parts of Arabia, gave this Appellation to the Country, though Yaarab, the aforesaid Patriarch of the Arabs, liv'd in another Part of

it at the same Time : For the Whole Region did
 not belong to one Proprietor. Whence 2 Chron.
 21. 16. are mention'd the Arabians living near the
 People of Cush, (translated improperly, Æthiopians)
 namely, the Arabs, that were seiz'd of the Inland
 Parts, and Neighbours to the Cushan Plantation;
 which lay along the Frontier, contiguous to Chal-
 dæa, their Antient Seat. In reality, the Father
 of the Æthiopians was *Phut*, whence Ezek.
 27. *Phutim*, *Libes*. But because the
 People of Cush, and the Æthiops, were both of a
 dark Complexion, the Greek Expositors put this
 Construction upon Cush, and made it signify 'A. *India*
 and 'A. *Sinica*; just as the Æthiopic Garamantes
 are improperly call'd Indians by some, because both
 Nations were of the same Hue. Therefore our
 English Version wants correcting in this Particular,
 and instead of [from India even to Æthiopia, Esth.
 1.] should be read, [even to Arabia.] And for Ebed-
 melech the Æthiopian, Ebedmelech the Arabian,
 or the Cushite.

Shushan was a City, in the Country of Elam, or
 Elymais, a Western Part of Media, call'd by the
 Persians *سوس* *Sûs* i. e. Glycyrrhiza. But
 the Jews in Compliment to Ahasuerus, per Euphemis-
 mum, by an agreeable way of Expression, (says
 my Author) call'd it *Sûsan*, i. e. *Lilium*.

There

There are a few Passages in the following Paraphrase, which seem to contradict a Position, the Incomparable Author above-mention'd, has asserted with so much Learning; that the Antient Persians never paid the SUN any Divine Worship, *Λατρεία*, but only Inferior Honour, such as is call'd *Δελαία* by the Nicer Part of the Romish Church. That therefore 'tis unnatural for me to describe them paying such Honours to the SUN, as could be suitable only to the Deity.

I might remove this Objection at once, by denying the Consequence, and affirming, that though there ever was a Sett of Men in Persia, that preserv'd the Knowledge and Worship of the One, Only, True God, yet Xerxes might relapse to the Sabäism of his Forefathers; which was a System of Rites, and Religious Observances, practis'd by the Sabii, who Worship'd the SUN, MOON, and STARS, with Divine Honours: For though his Father Darius Hystaspis became a Convert to Zoroaster, the Great Reformer, and Prophet of the Magi; yet we don't read that Xerxes follow'd his Example; and Dr. Hyde himself allows it probable, that some of the Persian Emperors did reject his Scheme, and fall into their Old Ceremonies. If so, then Xerxes might provide himself with Magi, and a Pontiff of his own creation, to perform the Sacred Rites to his GOD, the SUN. Besides, I might answer further, That this Worship I represent them giving the SUN, was only a Sort of *δελαία*, perform'd indeed before the SUN, or his IMAGE, but direct-

ed

ed ultimately to the Supreme Invisible Being. And this is the Doctor's avow'd Principle, that all the Homage they render'd him terminated in the True God, and was not design'd to the SUN at all. But I am apt to think, it may be made appear, that they paid Divine Adoration to the SUN himself, and thought him a kind of Subordinate Deity; or at least, inhabited and governed by one. This seems probable from the Book SAD-DER it self; which is an Abridgment of Zoroaster's Institution, and contains a Set of Rules he laid down for the Conduct of his Profelytes. I shall transcribe some Places from that Latin Version the Doctor has given us of it, he having not inserted the Persic Text. It is divided into a Hundred Chapters, or Portæ; a Metaphor the Author Delights in, styling his Book from thence, SAD-DER, or Centiportale. In the 6th Porta, among the Good Works he enjoins, the 4th and 5th are, Solem celebrare ter quovis Die-- Lunæ Celebrationem facere ter quovis Mense. And in Porta 11th, Pollutum & spurcum in Igne ne comburas, & tunc septem Climates Terræ (scilicet, totius Orbis) Ignis h. e. Sol, erit amicus, & certissimè contentus, & quando petendam habes aliquam petitionem aut desiderium, tum necessitas tua censebitur licita absque ullâ negatione. Quando autem Ignem in Sacro Foco non bene servas, tunc Ignis 7 Climates Terræ non erit tibi amicus, nec ullum desiderium & petitionem petes nisi quæ cadet, & non consistet. And again in Por. 43. Si Ignis Martis, h. e. Focus Sacer, sive Pyreum, benè custodiatur, 7 Terræ Climates Ignis erit de

te

te placatus, & complacens erit. Quando inquam placatus est Ignis Martis, Deus etiam de te placatus erit. *And again in Porta 45.* Omni Fœminæ pro peccato contra Solem se expiare mandatum est— *And in Por. 89—* Munificus sis, gratum enim erit Mihre, seu Soli & Stellis & Lunæ, quod super Liberalem splenduerint. *And lastly in the 96th Porta.* Salutationem ad Solem necessariam esse scito. Quicumq; est Religionis particeps, ter quovis Die ei salutationem faciat, si non, erit tibi Peccatum. Peccatum quoque augebitur quâvis vice, quâ salutationem non feceris.

Indeed the Doctor palliates the Plain Idolatry of the Persians in this Point, (as it certainly was, however they might disclaim the Imputation, and the Guilt of it,) by telling us, "That Zoroaster copied his Rites from the Jews, among whom he liv'd a long Time, and was Servant probably to Ezra; and that the Reverence he commanded his Partisans to pay to the Fire, was deriv'd from the Altar of Incense of the Jews, and was no more than That. The Doctor knew at the same Time, that the Veneration they shew'd the Fire, was much greater than the Jews render'd any Sacred Fire upon their Altars. Nay, it was of another Nature, as appears from the Quotations above; and besides, it was given the SUN too in a particular Manner, which is a manifest Relict of Sabaism, and could not be taken from the Jews: So that the Reason why they rever'd the FIRE, seems to be rather upon the Score of its Affinity with the
SUN

SUN, than because that Ceremony was impos'd by Zoroaster, as Part of the Jewish Ritual.

I have form'd this Paraphrase in a Manner perfectly different from the Greek one of Mr. Barnes. He was so ill a Model, that I could not reconcile my self to any Thoughts of Copying him. His Fancy is too Wild for a Paraphrase; and his Language, however Poetical, is too Luxuriant. His Management is full of Weaknesses, very often Trivial, and Improper; and not seldom void of Sense.

To point out the Guilty Places, would be as Invidious as Needless; they offer themselves to any Observer at First View; and can only be alleviated by One Plea, the Youth of the Author; which is a Circumstance, I hope, the Candid will consider in Favour of

Their Humble Servant

J. H.



ESTHER.

POEM.

BOOK I.



Hile *Fancy* leads her Gayer Sons astray,
In Fabl'd Scenes, and a Romantick
[Way;

While Lower Themes confine the Noble Fire,

Debase the Song, and prostitute the Lyre;

Thou,

Thou, Sov'reign Muse, who tun'st the Orbs on
[High,
Where Thou, and Harmony, are all the Joy,
To whose Blest Ear each Poet Angel plays,
And Consecrates thy Musick to thy Praise ;
Bear me, O bear me to those Sacred Plains,
Where Awful Truth in Genuine Beauty reigns ;
Where ev'ry Wond'rous Image speaks aloud
The Master-Hand, and Portraiture of God ;
Where *David's* Harp and Sceptre doubly sway,
And Eagle *Esay* soars his Trackless Way.
O may that Holy Gleam of Heav'n-born Light,
Which heighten'd *David's* Lay, and *Esay's* Flight,
Enlarge my Thought, and teach it to design
A Subject worthy Thee, by Copying Thine ;
In all my Soul an equal Rapture dwell,
And the Same Genius, which recorded, tell
What Smiling Hours on Humble Goodness wait ;
How Vice is but precariously Great :
That Beauteous Merit can a King subdue,
But Want of Worth is Want of Beauty too :

In vain the Fair *Hadassab's* Conquests tries,
Unless *Hadassab's* Vertues Arm her Eyes.

PERSIA in Bloom of opening Pow'r possess
The First Imperial Honours of the East;
A Hundred Vassal Thrones to Her's retain'd,
And bending Monarchs own'd their Queen's Com-
mand,
From *Niger's* Oary Bed, to *Ganges* Golden Strand.
Niger for her enrich'd his Yellow Streams
And *Ganges* beautify'd his Urn with Gems.
No *Greek* Competitor as yet was known
To shade her Glories by a Rival Throne,
To make a gen'ral Sceptre of his Sword,
And wish that *Hammon's* Son was *Hammon's* Lord.
Rome was an Infant yet, nor proudly strove
To share the Empire of the World with *Jove*:
A Birth of distant Heroes, Chiefs to come,
Lay forming in Prolifick *Rhea's* Womb.

Fame then was One, nor own'd a Second Seat,
And *Persia* only bore the Name of Great.
'Twas then the Mighty *Xerxes* fill'd the Throne,
Lord of the Globe, and Second to the Sun:
Cyrus was Founder of the *Persian* Pow'r,
But now the Line of *Cyrus* was no more;
The Line of *Cyrus* in *Cambyfes* dies,
And leaves contending *Peers* the Royal Prize.

Darius rose Superior to the Rest,
A Monarch by his Courser's Voice confest:
Darius now Commands what *Cyrus* won,
Raifes his Warrior Lawrels to a Throne,
And to *Cambyfes* Trophies adds his own.
Xerxes a bolder Chace of Fame began,
His Father's Course the Warlike Son out-ran:
Ægypt and *Scythia* felt his Iron-Rod,
And to the Universal Master bow'd:
Nile pour'd him Homage, and th' Impassive Sea,
That could not know his Lash, confess'd his Sway.

The Lovely *Vashti*, once a *Tyrian* Maid,
Was Part'ner of his Throne, and of his Bed:
The Publick Envy, and the Publick Fire
Of all the Daughters, and the Youths of *Tyre*:
Descended there of Antient Kingly Race,
In Fortune first, and ev'ry Charming Grace,
Had not a Rebel Pride deform'd the Dame,
And left a Blemish on her Virgin Fame:
Deep in her Heart the Pois'nous Rancour spread,
And on each Infant Seed of Vertue fed:
In wild Ambition all her Passions meet,
And ev'ry Thing is Good, if it be Great:
With double Force a Woman ever moves,
She Hates with Fury, and with Rapture Loves:
They're all Excessive, where they once engage,
Their Favour's Dotage, and their Anger Rage.
The Make's so Tender, and the Spring's so Fine,
So delicately Turn'd the whole Machine;

Wrought to the Height, no Mean the Movements
 (know,
 If Just they prove, they will Harmonious go ;
 But all is Discord at each idle Jarr,
 A Breath's a Hurricane, a Frown a War.
Vashti was all her Sex, and something more,
 Her Passions rul'd with a Tyrannick Power :
 A Lust of Glory urg'd her to despise
 Ev'ry inferior Martyr to her Eyes :
 With Royal Incense she was oft ador'd,
 But *Xerxes* pleas'd, for he was greatest Lord :
 She thought the Empire of the World alone,
 Due to her Beauty, and by Right her own.
 He sometimes read it in her Port and Mien ;
 Tho' Kings submitted, she resolv'd to Reign.

SHUSHAN the Rich his Fairest Mansion show'd,
 Which seem'd another Palace of his God.
 High on a Thousand Columns it uprears
 Its gilded Domes, like Knots of Neighbour Stars.

The costly Pile surpriz'd the ravish'd Eye,
 With all the *Indies* in Epitomy;
 And yet the Whole was so correctly Form'd,
 The Mind was Feasted, while the Sense was
 (charm'd.

Each Portal, all with Silver Folds inlay'd,
 A shining Lustre on the Walls display'd.
 A spacious Hall with Rev'rend Sculpture fill'd,
 His Grandfire Kings in Antient Cedar held:
 There Shields and Sabres in fierce Pomp appear,
 The Monumental Equipage of War.

Within, a lofty Throne was proudly rais'd,
 Where *Ophir's* and *Cambaia's* Treasures blaz'd.
 For all the *East* to it their Jewels ow'd,
 For this the *Ruby* blush'd, the *Jasper* glow'd;
 'Twas *Mithras* lent them ev'ry varying Dye,
 And gave them Light to grace his Votary.

Thrice had the Sun renew'd the gladsome Earth;
 Thrice drawn the Sable Curtain of the North;
 Since Xerxes took his Father's vacant Seat,
 And now a grateful Calm compos'd the State;
 The long Fatigues of Conqu'ring bid prepare
 For those new Sweets, which Crown the Toils of
 Engagements of a softer Kind succeed, (War:
 Where only streaming Wines, and Victims bleed.

XERXES, th' Exulting Realm with Transport
 (fees,

The highest Joy of Earthly Deities,
 And generously pleas'd, Descends to please.
 Eases his Grandeur with Familiar Grace,
 Forgets his Purple, and unveils his Face;
 To Head their Pleasures, lays the Monarch down,
 And while he adds to theirs, Exalts his own.

Heralds

Heralds the Scene of Pleasure soon Proclaim,
Worthy the Greatness of the *Persian* Name;
Worthy the God, from whom their Greatness sprung,
Bright as his Carr, and as his Progress long.

The opening Days a double Lustre wear;
Their Sov'reigns Birth-Day leads the joyous Year,
The Whitest in the *Persic* Calendar.

The Festal Summons to Fair *Shushan* brings,
A dazzling Frequence of a Hundred Kings:
Clos'd by Ten Thousand Lords, the Great Resort,
Mov'd onward to their Common Master's Court;
Where all the Delicates Both Worlds afford,
Fill'd with Luxurious Pride the Royal Board;
But e'er they could their Scheme of Joy pursue,
Some previous Honours to the SUN were due;
Stretching in long Array the Princely Train,
Solemn and slow, proceeded to the Fane.

A stately Hecatomb of Snowy Beeres,
 The best the Purple Mead of *Shushan* gives:
 Clean as the Light, and for its Author fed,
 Stalk'd in grave March, by mitred *Magi* led:
 Rolling in Shoals, the loud promiscuous Throng
 With shrill Acclaims, their Loyal Wishes rung.

The Rites Divine absolv'd, the Throng proceed,
 And to the Court in graceful Order lead:

The Higher Guests approach a Room of State,
 Where Tuff'd Couches all around were set,
 Labour'd with Art, o'er Iv'ry Tables thrown,
 Embroider'd Carpets fell in Folds adown,
 The Bow'rs and Gardens of the Court were near,
 And open Lights indulg'd the breathing Air.

Pillars of Marble bore a Silken Sky,
While Cords of Purple and fine Linnen tye
In Silver Rings, the Azure Canopy.
Distinct with Diamond Stars the Blue was seen,
And Earth, and Seas, were feign'd in Em'rald Green;
A Globe of Gold, ray'd with a pointed Crown,
Form'd in the midst almost a real Sun.

Beneath their Feet, a Brede of Arras ran,
All stiff with figur'd Gold in Tyrian Grain,
The Work of Queens : The Alabaster Floor,
A gleamy Lay of *Porphyry* varied o'er.
Huge Beakers of the noblest Metals wrought,
Told you how all the Father Heroes fought :
Here in the precious Annals you survey,
The glorious Horrors of that happy Day,
When fierce *Darius* chac'd his *Parthian* Prey.
Here the Rich Memoir in Embossment shows,
A bloody *Cyrus* push his dastard Foes :

A Golden *Xerxes* here the Champion scours,
And on the Headlong *Gêtes* his Vengeance pours.
The conscious Guests in graven Records read,
Some how they Conquer'd, others how they Fled.

They on each Bed reclin'd, in order spy
Far in the Centre, *Xerxes* plac'd on high,
Within a rais'd *Alcove*, Majestick lie.

The Pontiff of the SUN his Right-Hand grac'd,
So near his Prince by just Religion plac'd;

The Pious Monarch paid him but his Due,

The Priest, like him, was God's Vicegerent too;

And well the Pious Monarch knew that they

Are God's Vicegerents in the Noblest Way.

The Dames are in a sep'rate Region plac'd,

Vashti presiding o'er the Female Feast:

Th' inferior Lords in diff'rent Chambers meet,

Where Young *Arfaces* regulates the Treat:

The People in an Outer-Court receives

The Doles their Hospitable Monarch gives.

Ten Thousand Slaves, in Form, attending nigh,
Succinct and swift to ev'ry Quarter fly;

The Banquet o'er, the Genial Cups begin,
And Wreaths of Flow'rs refresh the glowing Wine;
Xerxes into the Royal Chalice pours,
Which *Cyrus*, and the *Median* Emperors,
From *Cynus* all along, carous'd of old,
Weighty with Inlaid Gems, and Massy Gold;
Then gives the foaming Vessel to the Priest,
Who ey'd the Sun, and thus his Vows exprest.

“ Lord of the Skies, to whose blest Pow'r we owe
“ Those Kindly Joys the Purple Grapes bestow;
“ With an unclouded Brow thy *Persia* view,
“ Glad ev'ry Heart, and ev'ry Joy renew;
“ And make this Year we give to Mirth and Thee,
“ A Prelude to an Endless Jubilee.

He

He said ; and gently touch'd the Swelling Brim,
 Then bow'd it to the Monarch. Strait from Him
 The Circulating Bowl serenely past ;
 For ev'ry Guest was Free to Quaff, or Taste.
 That Amicable Maxim was unknown,
 To push a Kind Debauch with Vigor on.
 Rude of those Arts, or Friendship to refine,
 Converse to them had Truer Charms than Wine.

Heavy the Scenes, and Irksome grow the Hours,
 Where no Kind Sounds apply their Soothing Pow'rs ;
Admetus, Master of th' Harmonious Quire,
 Touching with Tuneful Skill his Iv'ry Lyre ;
 Comely his Hair, with Laurel crown'd his Head,
 (As whilom Feign'd *Apollo* has been said,
 Like Young *Apollo* look'd, like Young *Apollo* play'd.

* Pupil

* Pupil to *Locrus*, a *Memphitic* Sage ;

For *Memphis* was the *Cambridge* of That Age ;

Memphis all Nature saw with Better Eyes,

Parent of Arts, and Mistress of the Wife.

He sung the Fires, that in the *Welkin* reign,

The Monarch Sun, and all his Radiant Train :

Then the Faint Strings in Dimmer Measures tune

The Gloomy Labours of the Suff'ring Moon ;

His Changing Looks, and whence it has the Force

To agitate the Tides, and rule their Course.

The Rise of Man, his High Capacious Mind,

Th' Inferior Talents of the Bestial Kind :

To *Persia* then he brought his Numbers down,

The Presence-Chamber of the Fav'ring Sun ;

He celebrates the Compaſs of her Sway,

Vaſt as his Circuit, and the Stage of Day.

?

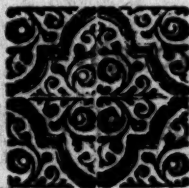
—Citharâ crinitus Iopas

Personat auratâ, docuit quæ maximus Atlas.

Virg. Æn. 1.

The

The Audience owns the Beauty of his Song,
 And Loud Applauses fill each Thankful Tongue.
 Rais'd by the Gentle Magic of his Lay,
 They in New Talk delude the Longsome Day ;
 Till to the Chambers of the Deep, the Sun
 Retiring, bid them part, and seek their own.



BOOK



BOOK II.

THUS they repos'd ; 'till with the Wak'ning
[Morn,

The Revels in a Gayer Dress return ;
And each advancing Day's Auspicious Light,
Opens a Brighter Field of New Delight ;
There, in a Wild of Pleasures, they might stray,
The Field was long and wide, and flow'ry was the
[Way.

Heav'n was all Smiles, and all Above was seen,
Like their own God, unclouded, and Serene :

The Monarch's Bliss alone was dash'd with Care,
By a sad Glance of some ill-omen'd Star :

The Monarch's Bliss is oft Imperfect too,
And tainted with a Chilling Blast of Woe ;

Not

Not all his Triumphs can elude the Pain,
Or elevate the Prince above the Man :
Not all the Sparkling Treasures of the *East*,
Can ease the Sickness of an Anxious Breast ;
Sometimes the Royal Soul will draw a Sigh,
When Flatt'ring Crowds salute Him DEITY.

From the Same Hand the Court this Evil feels,
That gave Mankind its Complement of Ills :
The Publick Joy was check'd by *Vashti's* Pride ;
The Woman cast a Gloom on All beside.
The Flying Bowl had given *Xerxes* Fire,
And wak'd a Spark of Amorous Desire :
Vashti's Bright Image to his Mind return'd,
Such as She was, when first the Lover burn'd.
Well the Chaste Rigor of the Law He knew,
Which screens their Beauties from the Common
[View ;
And, lest She raise a Foreign Guilty Flame,
That none but Eunuchs See, and Guard the Dame.

But

But now the Freer, Jovial Hours invite,
To take a Brimming Draught of full Delight;
And his Dispensing Will, his Orders join,
To soften the too Virtuous Discipline;
To bless their Eyes with her Accomplish'd Form,
Now ev'ry Pow'r, and ev'ry Sense is warm.

He call'd the Masters of the Eunuch Train,
And sent them to convey the Beauteous Queen.
She with Disdain the Royal Message took,
Chid the Bold Slaves, and redden'd as She spoke:
The Sea was Deaf to his Command; and She
Was Loud and Deaf, as was the angry Sea.
This struck th' Assembly with a Deep Surprize,
Waiting her slow Approach with Longing Eyes;
The Wrathful Sultan's Changing Visage show'd
Those Warring Hints, that in his Bosom glow'd;
Pale Indignation now o'erspread his Cheek,
And strait a Blush of Love began to break;

Thro'

Thro' all the Seats a Gen'ral Murmur ran,
When thus in Hasty Accents He began.

Shall I, who trample on the Necks of Kings;
I, at whose Feet the World her Sceptre flings;
At Home, a Tyrant *She's* Dominion bear;
Command the Globe, and bend a Subject here?
Decide, my Lords, if this be Just, or Kind;
And let your Thoughts instruct my dubious Mind.

Strait from his Seat the Sage *Memucan* rose,
The Mouth and Eye of the Debating House;
Whose Shoulders all the Civil Burden bear,
Another *Atlas* of a diff'rent Sphere;
A deep Experience on his Brow appears,
And awful Wisdom now grown grey with Years:
His Looks a Reverential Silence made;
And thus, with Grave Regard, the Ancient said.

Let

Let our Great Emperor for ever live,
And Just Obedience from the World receive.
I always deem'd, till this Amazing Day,
That *Xerxes* bore an Universal Sway ;
That the Great Iron-Rolls of Fate contain'd
No Laws more Sacred than his Firm Command.
And now, my Lords, You Fourscore Winters read,
In all this Snow that chills my Aged Head :
But, that a Woman, that his Empress too,
Whose Honours to his Hand their Being owe,
Should be the First that dares dispute his Word,
Limit his Empire, and disclaim her Lord ;
Is a Rebellion ominously New,
Casts an Ill Aspect both on Him and You :
'Twill form a welcome Standard to your Wives,
To Copy out the Pattern *Vashti* gives ;
Usurping Female Rule will bear away
The Native Privilege of Manly Sway.

It well becomes the Policy of Kings,
To check a growing Mischief, while it springs :
Let Haughty *Vashti* be chastiz'd in Time,
And know her Punishment, who knows her Crime;
No longer this Ill-fated Empress own,
But to a Worthier delegate her Throne ;
So shall the *Persian* Nuptial State, secure,
Upon its Proper Basis still endure :
And no Romantic Airs of Female Pride
Invert all Rule, and make the Wife Preside ;
But each Enlighten'd Spouse confine her Sway,
And learn her Proper Lesson, to *Obeys*.

Xerxes the Prudent Overture approv'd,
Proclaim'd the Fact, and *Vashti* was remov'd.

So, when the New-born Morning's Fairest Son
Lost his Obedience first, He lost his Throne ;
From Virtue fall'n, from Heav'n He ruin'd down,
Swift as that Lightning He would make his own.

The

The Fate of *Vashti* clos'd the Royal Feast,
 And her Disaster sadden'd ev'ry Guest.
 The Empire now was of a Consort void,
 And Widow'd *Xerxes* wish'd a Second Bride.
 Then, that the Throne a Successor might find,
 Of Equal Charms, but of a Lovelier Mind;
 A Beautiful *Seraglio* they prepare,
 To tempt his Choice, among the Fairest Fair:
 And Parties are dispatch'd to cull the Flow'r
 Of *Persian* Beauty all the Kingdom o'er.
 The Bright Collection soon to *Shushan* came,
 But Young *Hadassab* prov'd his Only Flame:
Hadassab, of the *Jewish* Lineage sprung,
 The Maid was *Esther*, in her Native Tongue.
 That Hapless Race in *Syria* long abode,
 And drain'd the Quiver of an angry God:
 Harrafs'd with *Babel's* Yoke, and all the Woes
 That Slaves can bear, or Tyrant Rage impose;

Till *Cyrus* view'd them with a pitying Eye,
 And set them from their yielding Masters free :
Cyrus, whose Virtues none can justly sing,
 The Perfect Model of a Finish'd King :
 Whom *ANNE* alone is destin'd to excel,
 In Living, Ruling, and in Conqu'ring well ;
 With such well-temper'd Wrath her Sword's em-
 [ploy'd,
 The Vanquish'd thinks he's on the Victor Side :
 Heav'n leaves his Bolts in her Deputed Hand,
 And knows She'll deal them with a God's Com.
 [mand-

The Rescu'd People *Ezra* soon recalls,
 To their Lov'd *Sion*, and their Ancient Walls ;
 But some loose Reliques of the *Hebrew* Kind,
 Charm'd by the Smiles of *Cyrus*, stay'd behind :
 Their Lot *Hadassab* shares ; Her Parents were,
 But now She finds them in an Uncle's Care ;
 Helpless, alone, of ev'ry Friend depriv'd,
 But ev'ry Friend in *Mordecai* surviv'd.

The

The tender Orphan never felt the Loss,
For *Mordecai* was all her Mother was.

Hadassah all the Heights of Woman shows,
None of their Faults, but all their Beauties
[knows:
Those scatter'd Graces, which the Best divide,
Assembl'd and improv'd, in Her reside:
Reverse to *Vashti* in her Whiter Soul,
Where ev'ry Virtue reigns without Controul.
Her Person heighten'd with a Nobler Air,
Which breath'd from Conscious Merit living there;
Superior too in Harmony of Form,
All over one entire distinguish'd Charm;
Her Body, fragrant as the Rising Day,
Was made some Nameless, some Uncommon Way,
Of Something finer than the finest Clay:
Such as Descending Cherubs seem to wear,
When with a Saint in Visions they confer,

Yet these Embellishments were but design'd
Foils to the Lustre of a Fairer Mind :
So Golden Fruits in Silver Pictures lye,
And glow with Bolder Life upon the Eye.
Celestial Love each gentle Movement sways,
And its soft Biass all the Frame obeys :
The Truth and Purity, and Calm Desire,
Ever attend, and ever fan the Fire.
She all the Turns of Varying Fortune prov'd,
To no Extreames irregularly mov'd ;
Receiv'd the Sun-shine, and the Storms of Fate,
Severely Fortunate, and Humbly Great :
She all the Arts of Speech compleatly knew,
And, what was more, the Arts of *Silence* too.

With all these Ornaments divinely grac'd,
The Maïd was in the wond'ring Circle plac'd,
To celebrate the Ceremonial Year,
With Sacred Odours, and with Oyl of Myrhe.

Sev'n Damsels follow'd each presumptive Queen,
And *Esther* had the same attending Train.
Often Kind *Mordecai* to Court repair'd,
And oft enquir'd about his Beauteous Ward;
But us'd the nicest Caution none should trace
Her strange Religion, and her *Hebrew* Race;
That all the Pow'r She gain'd, the Maid might
[use
For her own Altars, and her Kindred *Jews*.

The Solemn Rites accomplish'd, all the Fair,
As Rivals, for the Royal Choice appear:
Each Nymph, with borrow'd Helps, and Rich Array,
Strove with each Nymph, and sparkl'd for the
[Day;
While Artless *Esther*, 'midst the Vieing Maids,
Natively Charming, scorn'd those Foreign Aids:
And when the Virgin stood before the Throne,
Immortal Youth o'er all her Person shone.

Thoſe Lively Honours Hight Bloom ſupplies,
Glow in her Cheeks, and beam around her Eyes.

Soon as She entred, She was more than Queen,
And one Victorious Look enſur'd her Reign :
To ſo much Worth with ſo much Beauty join'd,
Of Right belong'd the Empire of Mankind.
Xerxes reſign'd his Globe with Pleaſure there,
Great in his World, but Greater far in Her.

Yet ſtill obſervant of her Uncle's Word,
As if her Uncle ſtill had been her Lord ;
She never broke the Secret, who She was,
The Guardian Angel of the *Jewiſh* Cauſe.
So over ev'ry Mortal, ev'ry Land,
Behind the Scenes thoſe aiding Spirits ſtand,
Each Patron unperceiv'd, unſeen each Guiding
[Hand.]

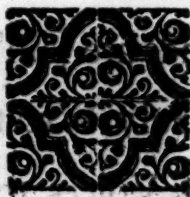
The

The destin'd Nuptials bring a Second Feast,
 And their past Joys revive in ev'ry Breast.
 But first the Stars are by the *Magi* view'd,
 The Stars say all that's Happy, all that's Good.
 Their Tutelary Sun above displays,
 Peculiar Smiles and more delightful Rays.
 Unusual Splendor fills th' exulting Court;
 There all the Young, and all the Gay resort.

They the Great Couple 'to the Temple lead,
 And all the Sacred Way with Carpets spread;
 And all the Sacred Way with Flow'rs they strow,
 Greeting the Royal Pair with many a tender Vow.
 Lo! Now their Hands are join'd, the Hymens ring,
 And crown'd with Holy Wreaths the *Magi* Sing.
 The People lift their Voices to the Skies,
 In Ecchocs, and in Thunder Heav'n replies,
 And a Right-Handed Clap gives its Auspicious
 (Noise.)

The

The well-known Harp, by Great *Admetta* strung,
 Softly begins the Matrimonial Song.
 He bodes to *Persia* all She can desire,
 And founds the Blessing on his chearful Lyre :
 A Golden Series of the brightest Years,
 A Pomp of greater Months adorns his Verse.
 Then all prepare for Scenes of new Delight,
 While Trumpets close the Day, and Masks abridge
 [the Night.



BOOK



 BOOK III.

TH' Heroick Soul, amidst its Bliss or Woe,
 Is never swell'd too high, nor sunk too low ;
 Stands, like its Origin, above the Skies,
 Ever the *same Great Self*, sedately Wife !
 Collected and prepar'd in ev'ry Stage,
 To scorn a Courting World, or bear its Rage.

Thus the Queen's Breast her Private Virtues fill,
 And *Esther*, tho' in Robes, is *Esther* still,
 Well to the Godlike Empress was it known,
Many can have, but *Few* can wear a Crown.

The

The Joys her Palace added, were the Pow'r
Of acting nobler Things, and giving more ;
But the just Progress of a Noble Mind,
Is to be Grateful first, and then be Kind :
The first best Object of her gen'rous Eye,
Was her Old Guardian, Trusty *Mordecai* ;
She painted to the King his high Desert,
His Prudence, Secrecy, and Faithful Heart :
And gain'd the Signet of her willing Lord,
To place him o'er his Chamber and his Board.

Mordecai long in *Shushan* humbly liv'd,
Of all his Patrimonial Wealth bereav'd :
Judea serv'd a Master not her own,
No Soil was Faithful to its Antient Stone :
Babel's encroaching Fury did the Wrong,
Born to confound her State, as well as Tongue.
Embarrafs'd their Demefnes, transfer'd their Lands,
From ev'ry Native Lord to Foreign Hands :

Mordecai

Mordecai shar'd his Countrey's Common Woes,
His ripen'd Autumn for another rose ;
Yet what th' injurious Spoiler's Hand deny'd,
With Industry and Ease his own supply'd :
Was, tho' deprest in Life, from Envy pure,
Honestly Mean, and laudably Obscure,
Till kind *Hadassah* with a Smiling Ray,
Open'd his Shade, and call'd him to the Day ;
Planted his Vertues in a fairer Light,
And made his Fortunes, as his Merits, bright.

So when the mellowing Sun's mysterious Pow'r,
Forms in the Mine a Rich Metallic Oar :
Deep in its Secret Bed the Treasure lies,
Nor heals our Losses, nor improves our Joys :
Is Useless, tho' intrinsically Good,
Till by more Eyes, than that of Heaven view'd :
But when produc'd, and destin'd once to Grace,
The Royal Image of a Monarch's Face,
It Charms each Heart, and Blesses ev'ry Place.

Mordecai

Mordecai had the hidden Circle run,
Of ev'ry Grace, and settled Heav'n his own ;
His distant Orb of private Virtue fill'd,
From all but Angels, and such Friends conceal'd.
Ne'er thought it worth his Conscience to be Great,
Tho' changing That, he might have chang'd his State.
The Love of *Salem* was his only Pride,
Not the Religion of the Reigning side :
In his own Cause was regularly warm,
And hated, on Occasion, to conform :
Would not betray his God to serve a Turn,
But made the thriving Villany his Scorn.
Could not Intrigue and Flatter for a Place,
Or Discipline to Lies a practis'd Face :
Devoid of Art, and careless to Refine,
He look'd, he spoke, he liv'd without Design.

In the straight Limits of his narrow Sphere,
The Indigent still found his Friendly Care :

And

And now advanc'd, he studied to be seen
Obliging more, and with a better Mien.
But Envy ever haunts Desert in Power,
Will often leer askew upon its Store,
And like a *Harpy*, taint, if not devour.
Bigthan and *Teresb* saw with deep Regret,
A Novice flourish in their Rightful Seat.
From Antient Services they now commence
An easier Title, and more just Pretence.
Barr'd of their Hopes, with mad Ambition stung,
They soon resolv'd on Vengeance for the Wrong.
Drive their Resentments on the Royal Head,
And make the Master for the Servant Bleed.
Th' Abortive Plot had met a full Success,
Had they been more Discreet, or he been less.
Silent as Death, that Death themselves prepare,
Traitors should move, and dark as Midnight Air:
If the least Day break in upon the Scheme,
It Dies, and passes as a gliding Dream:

So

So Hell-born Spirits roam in depth of Night,
 And skim away before the dawning Light.
Mordecai, wakeful as he was, betray'd
 What the too sanguine Wretches faintly said :
 By its own Shine the Glow-Worm Project kill'd,
 And to *Hadassab* all the Scene reveal'd.
 Both to the King his coming Fate unfold,
 The Crime was punish'd, and the Plot enroll'd ;
 The Annals of the *Persian* Story tell,
 How *Bigthan* perish'd, and how *Teresb* fell ;
 What was from *Xerxes*, and from *Persia* due,
 To him who *Xerxes* sav'd, and *Persia* too ?

So when the Feather'd Monarch of the Air,
 Whose Pounce and Thunder, and whose Eyes the
 (Light'ning bear ;
 Has from a Hungry Vulture snatch'd the Prey,
 The baffled Fowl allows his Sacred Sway,
 But with a vow'd Revenge Careers away.

Murmurs aloof, and in the Glade repines,
Then in some Covert broods his black Designs :
Hovers around the Court with Felon Wings,
And near the Court the treach'rous Ruin brings :
Often by Night the sable Welkin scours,
And with Intrigue supplies his want of Force :
Till the sharp Ken of some more Loyal Bird,
Opens the Treason, and redeems his Lord :
Strait by a just Decree the Rebel Dies,
And substitutes himself the juster Sacrifice.

But now the Balance turns, and when the Crown
Was skreen'd from Ruin, he approach'd his own.
He and his guiltless Brethren doom'd to Die,
Victims to *Haman's* vengeful Cruelty.
Ev'n now aloft the stormy Cloud proceeds,
And nearly threatens their devoted Heads.
Each *Hebren* had the fatal Havock shar'd,
Had not some gen'rous Angel been their Guard.

Like him, who on the Plains of *Goshan* tose,
And turn'd the Edge of Slaughter on their Foes.

Haman's Address, his Stars, and something more,
Had plac'd him foremost in the Chace of Pow'r:
Thro' various rugged Paths had forc'd his Way,
And from disputing Courtiers won the Day.
A Master-Stroke of Cunning topp'd his Part,
And Breach of Honesty was fill'd by Art:
Of mean Originals the Meteor sprung,
Only a glitt'ring Cloud, nor glitt'ring long.

For Lead sometimes will bear a nobler Ore,
And baser Mold improve into a Flow'r.
Haman had now engros'd the Royal Ear,
Another *Xerxes* govern'd in the Peer.
The Reins of State were left in *Haman's* Hand,
And all his God could see, was his Command.
To the great Idol all the Palace bow'd,
And Kings were Happy that could gain a Nod,

For him a Fry of craving Bards would tire,
 With many a painful Thump the drudging Dyre.
 For him the Curious oft would plod the Sky,
 And each new World was *Haman's* Property.
 Himself in Constellation sparkled there,
 And *Haman* hung with Honour in a Star.
 He was the Muse invoc'd by every Pen,
 Of the Projecting, Reasoning, Chyming Train:
 Dub'd by his Height of Favour with the King,
 A Critick, Poet, Sage, and every Thing.
 They that aspir'd to gain the Favourite Side,
 Carefs'd his Vanity, and sooth'd his Pride.
 For Honour was the Quarry he pursu'd,
 And Grandeur was his First, his only Good.
 To compass these no Engine he would spare,
 But all was *Virtue*, if it center'd there:
 Would, as the Juncture ask'd, Embrace or Kill,
 Hug you to Death, or Stab you with a Smile.
 All the wild Lengths of Noble Mischief run,
 And leave no shining Wickedness unknown.

Demurely o'er the Publick Ruins move,
And Colour ev'ry Step with Publick Loye.

Millions of Tortures in the deepest Hell;

The doubly, Curst Ambitious Soul shall feel:

At him shall all the Reddest Bots be aim'd,

And the False Patriot shall be more than damn'd.

Just to the Prime Apostate strove to rise,

And all the Prime Apostate's Plagues are his:

On the same Views he forms his treach'rous Mind,

To rend all Nature, and inflame Mankind.

The Bosom of his Parent-Country fills

With Discord, Fury, and a Glut of Ills:

Tumult and Faction, Fraud and War compose,

His baleful Equipage, where'er he goes.

Thus the wild Lengths of Noble Mischief run,
And leave no shining Wickedness unknown.

Demurely

D 2

Thus *Haman* shone, by all the World ador'd :
But *Mordecai* the Sacrilege abhor'd ;
He well the gawdy outside Pageant knew,
And saw all Mischief at the inward View ;
Though Great in Purple, spy'd a Villain there ;
A Traitor saw in Ambush in the Peer.
And when each Knee obsequiously bow'd,
Reserv'd the Sacred Homage for his God :
For *Haman*, by his blinded Lord's Decree,
Challeng'd the Honours of a Deity.

Press'd with the Court of his officious Train,
He wanted Leisure to observe the Man :
But when his wond'ring People ask'd the Cause,
And told him who the bold Recusant was :
(For *Mordecai* avow'd he was a Jew,
Both in Extraction, and Persuasion too ;
And that the Great *Jehovah* he ador'd
In Worship, cou'd admit no Rival Lord.

To *Haman's* just Commands he would submit,
 But would not, could not bow at *Haman's* Feet.)
 The strange Presumption mortify'd him more,
 Than all that Incence pleas'd, he took before.

When Captive Souls a Tyrant Passion feel,
 They kindle in themselves a secret Hell :
 Guilt is its own Avenger, and the Mind
 Preys on its self, that is to Vice resign'd,
 Pride with the Swell it gives, a Poyson brings,
 And while it Tickles, has a Thousand Stings.

With fell Resentments *Haman* inly pin'd,
 And Rage and Scorn by turns engross his Mind :
 Soon he resolves the Bloodiest Schemes to form,
 And glut with Slaughter his Avenging Arm.
 'T had been a waste to let his Thunder die,
 On the vile Head of Worthless *Mordecai* :
 His glutton Fury was not to be fill'd,
 Till Hecatombs of all the Race were kill'd :

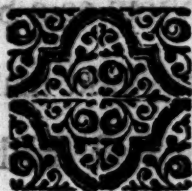
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The Tyrant's future Wish is *Haman's* now,
To sweep the Faction with a single Blow:
That the next Heirs of *Persia* might not see,
The very Ruins of the *Jewish* Progeny.

He opens first the Project to the King,
And gains the Sanction of th' Imperial Ring:
Deludes his Master with a Specious Tale,
He knew would o'er his easy Make prevail:
Of Bosom Traytors lurking in the State,
Spreading their Rancor in the Royal Seat:
Of Foreign Rife, that all the Rebel Cause,
Were Foes to *Persia's* Gods, and *Persia's* Laws.
Th' Impostor draws them as a Sett of Men,
That sapp'd his Empire, and malign'd his Reign.
And Vows, before the Pest shall over-run
The Common-Weal, he'll Sacrifice his own;
To the last Talent their Destruction drive,
And for each Breathless *Jew* a Thousand give.

So should the well-pois'd Orb of Civil Power,
Revolve with Harmony, and Jarr no more.

Their Doom was sign'd, and with immediate haste,
To ev'ry Corner of the Kingdom past :
All *Persia* took it with a sad Surprise,
Compassion fill'd her Breast, and Tears her Eyes.
While *Haman* with his Lord the Bowl pursu'd,
And wish'd that ev'ry Draught was *Jewish* Blood.



BOOK

 B O O K IV.

BUT who the Pain those Dying Wretches
 Without a Grief a-kin to their's, can tell?

To paint the Sorrows of the Trembling *Jews*,

An equal Sorrow must inspire the Muse.

Prostrate in Ashes They desponding lay,

And clad in Penal Sackcloth, wept away

The bitter Minutes of the Lonely Day.

Mordecai's Anguish owes its Rise to their's,

He labours with their Sighs, and weeps their Tears.

He was, in all but Pow'r, their *Moses* now,

Godlike as He of Old, and Gen'rous too:

Glori-

Gloriously lavish of his Soul as He,
He wish'd a Ransom for the Whole to die ;
Burn'd to sustain the Coming Shock alone,
And greatly for each Life expend his own.
In vain : Ev'n now they tread the Dreary Path,
That leads to Darkness and the Vale of Death.
No View of Safety, no Reprieve is near,
But all Extremes of Horror and Despair ;
Till one Enliv'ning Beam relieves the Scene,
And points them out a Rescue in the Queen.
On all the Wings of Eager Hope and Fear,
He flies to Court, and sends his Mournful Pray'r :
She takes the Message from an Eunuch's Hand,
For none but Eunuchs there Admittance gain'd ;
With pale Amaze the Bloody Roll survey'd,
And in each Line her own Destruction read ;
Saw a Dire Purple of a Sadder Dye,
Ready to stain her Fading Royalty.
Much her own Fate, but more her People's mourns,
Then, with this Answer, the Decree returns.

That

‘ That tho’ by Law ’twas Death immediate known,
‘ Uncall’d, to dare approach th’ Imperial Throne;
‘ She’d fooner try the Mercy of her Lord,
‘ Than fall a Hopeless Prey to *Haman’s* Sword;
‘ Push the last Effort to reverse their Doom,
‘ And fling the Vengeance on its Authors home.
‘ But first a Fast shou’d hallow the Design,
‘ And Publick Vows atone the Wrath Divine;
‘ That while their Souls in Pray’r to Heav’n they
 [*give,*
‘ Their Pitying God might smile, and bid them
 [*Live.*

She spake : And soon the *Jews* unite their
 [*Pray’rs;*
The sadly-pleasing Sounds *Jehovah* hears;
Wing’d by *Hadassah’s* Sighs, they pierce the Sky,
Nor obvious Winds defeat them as they fly.

Soon

Soon as the Sun light up the Beamy Morn,
Sooth'd with a short Repose, her Griefs return,
Urge on the Gen'rous Queen her Pow'r to try,
And raise again Desponding *Israel* high.
Anxious She puts her Royal Habit on,
And goes a Trembling Suppliant to the Throne.
Purple her Vest, her Bridal Crown She wears,
And mingling Gems relieve her Shadowing Hairs :
An Humble Sweetness shines thro' all her Mien,
Gracefully mild ; and in her Look was seen
All the True State of an Unconscious Queen.
He, with Surprize, th'advancing Empress view'd,
And by the Noted Sign his Favour shew'd ;
Reach'd out his Sceptre with a willing Hand,
And bid Her That, and All it rul'd, Command.
This Kind Assurance re-inspires her Breast,
And while her Eyes a modest Hope confest,
She spoke ; desiring that her Lord wou'd grace
To-morrow's Sun in an Inferior's Place,

And

And sit contented at his Handmaid's Feast;
 Begging that *Haman* be the Second Guest:
 With Freedom She'd unbosom then the whole,
 And ease the Secret that oppress'd her Soul.

Haman with Triumph overheard the while,
 And saw the King consenting with a Smile:
 With Tow'ring Thoughts his Figure He surveys,
 Whom Sov'reigns of the Globe were proud to
 [please;
 For while the Subject-Nations Them ador'd,
 They worshipp'd Him, and He was Real Lord.
 Scepters, and Dreams of Royal State, are still
 The Bright Ideas that his Fancy fill:
 Pleas'd with his New, Imaginary State,
 He flies, his future Honours to relate;
 But, in the Portal, saw the Daring Jew
 Deny those Honours still, he thought his Due:
 Then hastens Home, with Indignation fir'd,
 And all his Friends th' Uncommon Scene admir'd:

With

With Rapture now, and then with Anger took
 The Various News: Till thus *Zareffa* spoke,
 (*Zareffa* was a Female *Hamun* grown,
 Both were in Temper, as in Marriage, One:
 What He inclin'd to, She would ne'er controul,
 For He's was but the Copy of His Soul:
 Resembling Minds th' Harmonious Pair inform'd;
 The same Aversions could, the same Affections
 [warm'd.]
 [please:]

' Ere 't a Gibbet near the Royal House,
 ' Where *Judas* to his Entertainment goes
 ' Plant it in Prospect, Fifty Cubits High,
 ' And finish the Regale with *Mordecai*.
 Pleas'd with his New, Imaginary State,

Strait the whole Cabinet her Project pleas'd,
 And full in View the *Dire Machine* rais'd.
 Deny those Honours still, he thought his Due:

Some Hours had pass'd, since the departing Sun
 Had clos'd his Scene, and let the Curtain down;

With

The

The Queen of Night had Half her Circle trac'd,
 Shedding soft Dews and Shumbers as She pass'd
 An Azure Vest, impearl'd with Stars, She wore;
 Ebon her Carr, a Silver Crown She bore;
 And Darkneſs came behind, and Silence went
 [before.]

The Breathing Worlds her Gentle Aid receive,
 By a ſhort Fit of Death reſtor'd to live.
 By Her the Nymph forgets her wak'ning Flames,
 And Peaceful *Haman* calmly plots in Dreams.
 By Her the Wretched lay aſide their Cares,
 And *Jews* condemn'd to die, ſuſpend their Fears.
 By Her the toiling Swain Repoſe enjoys,
 And with the Greateſt Monarch equal lies.

Not ſo the Ruler of the *Persian* Pow'rs;
 Wakeful and Sad, He counts the Length'ning Hours;
 Unprivileg'd amid his Crowns to taſte
 The Kind, Myſterious Sweets of Genial Reſt.

Dark-

Darkling He sighs, and tries unnumber'd Ways
 To soften his Disquiet into Ease:
 Then calls aloud a Slave, attending near
 To guard his Person with incessant Care;
 Bids him the Records of the Palace bring,
 Where ev'ry Life's describ'd of ev'ry King.
 To smooth Him, the designing Servant reads
 His own Successes and Illustrious Deeds;
 Pursues the Story to that Gloomy Page,
 Which *Tereſb* Spite relates, and *Bigthan's* Rage;
 Where *Mordecai* in Fairer Colours shines,
 The Loyal Baffler of their Fell Designs.
 The King, with Sense of Gratitude inspir'd,
 What Thanks his Benefactor had, enquir'd.
 'Twas answer'd, by his own Express Command,
 An Under-Station in the Court he gain'd.
 He blush'd to find so Bright a Merit there,
 In so Unequal, so Remote a Sphere:
 He, to whose Piety Himself He ow'd,
 Depress'd, and huddl'd with th' Inferior Crowd.

Then meditates what Due Returns thou'd Crown
His Life and Fortune, who insur'd his own.

In this amusing Train of silent Thought,
The King his past Inquietudes forgot :
And when the Shrill Proclaimer of the Morn
Publish'd in Silver Sounds her glad Return,
Resolv'd his Grateful Purpose to pursue,
He ask'd, if any wait without ; and who ?
Th' Enquiring Slave intriguing *Haman* spies,
Oft traversing the Court in thoughtful Guise ;
The Fatal Billet in his Bosom lay,
Which fix'd the Destiny of *Mordecai*.
Directed to approach his Master's Bed,
To the Declining Fav'rite thus He said.

' In what Distinction shall the Man appear,
' Who may his Sov'reign's Choicest Favours wear ?

E

Transport-

Transported *Haman* glow'd with Conscious Joy,
And form'd in eager Terms this swift Reply :

‘ Let all the Marks of Royal Honour join,
‘ To make Him worthy such Indulgence shine.
‘ Let Him th’ Imperial Chariot strait ascend,
‘ And Princes his Triumphant Wheels attend :
‘ Let Them the Diadem and Sceptre bring,
‘ The Regal Purple, and the Sacred Ring :
‘ In all this Pomp of Sov’reign Honours drest,
‘ Let Him proceed amid the Court confest ;
‘ Usher’d thro’ Crowds, with this Superior Praise,
‘ *This is the Man the King delights to grace.*

To *Mordecai*, says He, this Figure’s due :
And the sole Conduct we have left to *You*.

Confounded and unmann’d, he quits the Place,
Then with Regret the harsh Command obeys ;

Covers

Covers his Head, and sunk in Terror, goes,
His sad Reverse of Fortune to disclose.

Zareffa was alarm'd to see Him come,
Drooping, in this dejected Posture, Home:
But when the Mournful Cause his Silence told,
And Conscious Friends the Tragedy unfold;
' If, says his Boding Spouse, your Rival come
' Of that Curs'd Race, that now expect their Doom;
' In Their's, You've seal'd your own: Despair, and
[dye;
' For He is *Haman* now, and You are *Mordecai*.

And now the Noon-tide Breezes softly play,
And breathe a Coolness on the glowing Day;
The Queen attended in a Summer-Bow'r
Her Lord, and *Haman*, at the destin'd Hour.
The Summer-Bow'r was clad with Living Green,
Lawrels and Myrtles wove the Shady Scene,
Tissu'd amidst with Fragrant Jessamine.

The Feast was chosen with the Nicest Care,
The best that Art could yield, or Nature bear :
Here ev'ry Labour'd Viand they receive,
The Polish'd Luxury of Courts can give ;
There all the Finer Elegancies please,
The Country pours, and Heav'n alone can dress.
To the Delights in Temp'rate Plenty found,
The Bowl succeeded, and the Wine was crown'd.
Then *Xerxes* first address'd the Pensive Queen,
And ask'd the Mystery, that caus'd her Pain.
She, all in Tears, explain'd her secret Woe,
And shew'd the Treach'rous Hand that gave the
[Blow,
With Speechless Anger, from his Seat He sprung,
A Burst of Passion ty'd his falt'ring Tongue :
Then walk'd into the Solitary Glade,
To call the Pow'rs of Reason to his Aid.
Haman the while, agast with pale Dismay,
On the Queen's Couch, imploring Mercy, lay :

When

When He re-entring, cries, in loud Amaze,
 A Rape attempted here ; and to my Face ?
 Scarce were the winged Sounds dismiss'd to Air,
 When Officers advance, and Guards appear.
 The Half-Expiring Criminal they seize,
 And with a Sable Kerchief veil his Eyes :
 The Fashion of the Court requir'd it so,
 Their Horror at a Traitor's Face to show :
 And lest, unworthy of the Day, his Sight
 Offend their God, and taint his Sacred Light.

Surrounding Peers with busy Thought contrive,
 Weighing what Proper Punishment to give ;
 When *Arbon*, Leader of the Eunuchry,
 Remark'd the Fatal Engine rising nigh,
 And open'd the Design on *Mordecai*,

He the Prime Confidence of *Haman* gain'd,
 Ever the Fallen Fav'rite's Menial Friend.
 Then *Xerxes*, more enrag'd ; ' Our Turn was near,
 ' The

‘ The Sweeping Traytor meant Us All a Share ;
‘ Profuse of Death ! ’Tis just He shou’d enjoy
‘ Th’ unrival’d Use of his own Property.

He spoke : And They aloft the Caitiff rear,
A Prey to all the Tyrants of the Air.

A Ghastly Instance, what a Change of Fate
Th’ Unthinking Wretch must feel, who’s only
[Great!

Soon as the Haughty Minion’s Fall was known,
A Gen’ral Pleasure fill’d th’ Exulting Town :

The Happier *Jews* display’d Superior Joy,
Blest with New Life, and sweeter Liberty.

A Countermand, which *Esther* had procur’d,
Cancell’d the dire Commission of her Lord :

And gave the *Jews* discretionary Leave,
Or to do Justice on their Foes, or Save.

Soon as the Day of Massacre arriv’d,
The fell Conspirators their Doom receiv’d.

Persia her self was *Jewish* now, and view’d
Without a Tear, her Recreant Sons in Blood.

Th’

Th' Avenging *Hebrew* Sword perfu'd its Rage,
Till all the Faction felt its baleful Edge :
Numbers in Bleeding *Shushan* met their Fate,
And *Haman's* Race destroy'd the Scene complet.
Ten Youths of blooming Hopes, and fair Regard
Were Smote, and their Paternal Gibbet shar'd.
Now sprightly Hallelujahs fill the Sky
Of Conqu'rors, join'd in Grateful Jubilee.

Now *Mordecai*, exempt from Treach'rous Ills,
The Character of *Haman* brightly fills ;
And Consecrates the Blest Auspicious Day,
Which he allotted for a diff'rent Prey :
For ever Solemn in the *Jewish* Year,
And Red with Sacred Honours in the Calendar.
Xerxes with Joy, the World compos'd, surveys ;
The World with Joy the Monarch's Nod obeys.
They in his Glory to support their own ;
The Wealth and Happiness of both is one ;

Furnish his ebbing Funds, a swift Supply,
 Lower'd in Gen'rous Works of Royalty.
 The Golden *East* unlocks her shining Stores,
 And farthest *Ind'* her Native Riches pow'rs :
 Tis Noble Gain, whatever's thus bestow'd,
 O'er-paid in large Returns of Common Good.

Still *Mordecai* his Glorious Second Reign'd,
 A Foe to Wrong, to Truth a steady Friend.
 Father of *Persia* thro' the Kingdom nam'd,
 A Patriot, or a present God proclaim'd.
 By him they daily find their Bliss improve,
 And pay his Publick Care with Universal Love.

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